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I—THE TRUMPET-VINE ARBOR



HE throats of the little red trumpet-flowers
are wide open,
And the clangor of brass beats against the
hot sunlight.
They bray and blare at the burning sky.
Red! Red! Coarse notes of red,
Trumpeted at the blue sky.
In long streaks of sound, molten metal,
The vine declares itself.
Clang!—from its red and yellow trumpets;
Clang!—from its long, nasal trumpets,
Splitting the sunlight into ribbons, tattered and shot with
noise.

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

I sit in the cool arbor, in a green and gold twilight.
It is very still, for I cannot hear the trumpets,
I only know that they are red and open,
And that the sun above the arbor shakes with heat.
My quill is newly mended,
And makes fine-drawn lines with its point.
Down the long white paper it makes little lines,
Just lines—up—down—criss-cross.
My heart is strained out at the pin-point of my quill;
It is thin and writhing like the marks of the pen.
My hand marches to a squeaky tune,
It marches down the paper to a squealing of fifes.
My pen and the trumpet-flowers,
And Washington's armies away over the smoke-tree to the
southwest.
"Yankee Doodle", my darling! It is you against the British,
Marching in your ragged shoes to batter down King George.
What have you got in your hat? Not a feather, I wager.
Just a hay-straw, for it is the harvest you are fighting for.
Hay in your hat, and the whites of their eyes for a target!
Like Bunker Hill, two years ago, when I watched all day
from the housetop,
Through Father's spy-glass,
The red city, and the blue, bright water,
And puffs of smoke which you made.
Twenty miles away,
Round by Cambridge, or over the Neck,
But the smoke was white—white!

To-day the trumpet-flowers are red—red—
 And I cannot see you fighting;
 But old Mr. Dimond has fled to Canada,
 And Myra sings “Yankee Doodle” at her milking.

The red throats of the trumpets bray and clang in the
 sunshine,
 And the smoke-tree puffs dun blossoms into the blue air.

II—THE CITY OF FALLING LEAVES

Leaves fall,
 Brown leaves,
 Yellow leaves streaked with brown.
 They fall,
 Flutter,
 Fall again.
 The brown leaves,
 And the streaked yellow leaves,
 Loosen on their branches
 And drift slowly downwards.
 One,
 One, two, three,
 One, two, five.
 All Venice is a falling of autumn leaves—
 Brown,
 And yellow streaked with brown.

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

“That sonnet, Abate,
Beautiful,
I am quite exhausted by it.
Your phrases turn about my heart,
And stifle me to swooning.
Open the window, I beg.
Lord! What a strumming of fiddles and mandolins!
'Tis really a shame to stop indoors.
Call my maid, or I will make you lace me yourself.
Fie, how hot it is, not a breath of air!
See how straight the leaves are falling.
Marianna, I will have the yellow satin caught up with silver
fringe,
It peeps out delightfully from under a mantle.
Am I well painted to-day, *caro Abate mio*?
You will be proud of me at the Ridotto, hey?
Proud of being *cavaliere servente* to such a lady?”
“Can you doubt it, *bellissima Contessa*?
A pinch more rouge on the right cheek,
And Venus herself shines less . . .”
“You bore me, Abate,
I vow I must change you!
A letter, Achmet?
Run and look out of the window, Abate.
I will read my letter in peace.”

The little black slave with the yellow satin turban
Gazes at his mistress with strained eyes.

His yellow turban and black skin
 Are gorgeous—barbaric.
 The yellow satin dress with its silver flashings
 Lies on a chair,
 Beside a black mantle and a black mask.
 Yellow and black,
 Gorgeous—barbaric.
 The lady reads her letter,
 And the leaves drift slowly
 Past the long windows.
 “How silly you look, my dear Abate,
 With that great brown leaf in your wig.
 Pluck it off, I beg you,
 Or I shall die of laughing.”

A yellow wall,
 Aflare in the sunlight,
 Chequered with shadows—
 Shadows of vine-leaves,
 Shadows of masks.
 Masks coming, printing themselves for an instant,
 Then passing on,
 More masks always replacing them.
 Masks with tricorns and rapiers sticking out behind
 Pursuing masks with veils and high heels,
 The sunlight shining under their insteps.
 One,
 One, two,

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One, two, three,
There is a thronging of shadows on the hot wall,
Filigreed at the top with moving leaves.
Yellow sunlight and black shadows,
Yellow and black,
Gorgeous—barbaric.
Two masks stand together,
And the shadow of a leaf falls through them,
Marking the wall where they are not.
From hat-tip to shoulder-tip,
From elbow to sword-hilt,
The leaf falls.
The shadows mingle,
Blur together,
Slide along the wall and disappear.

Gold of mosaics and candles,
And night-blackness lurking in the ceiling beams.
Saint Mark's glitters with flames and reflections.
A cloak brushes aside,
And the yellow of satin
Licks out over the colored inlays of the pavement.
Under the gold crucifixes
There is a meeting of hands
Reaching from black mantles.
Sighing embraces, bold investigations,
Hide in confessionals,
Sheltered by the shuffling of feet.

Gorgeous—barbaric
 In its mail of jewels and gold,
 Saint Mark's looks down at the swarm of black masks;
 And outside in the palace gardens brown leaves fall,
 Flutter,
 Fall.
 Brown,
 And yellow streaked with brown.

Blue-black the sky over Venice,
 With a pricking of yellow stars.
 There is no moon,
 And the waves push darkly against the prow
 Of the gondola,
 Coming from Malamocco
 And streaming toward Venice.
 It is black under the gondola hood,
 But the yellow of a satin dress
 Glares out like the eye of a watching tiger.
 Yellow compassed about with darkness,
 Yellow and black,
 Gorgeous—barbaric.
 The boatman sings,
 It is Tasso that he sings;
 The lovers seek each other beneath their mantles,
 And the gondola drifts over the lagoon, aslant to the coming
 dawn.
 But at Malamocco in front,

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In Venice behind,
Fall the leaves,
Brown,
And yellow streaked with brown.
They fall,
Flutter,
Fall.

Amy Lowell